

STRATEGIES OF POST-ADHESION OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF BUCHAREST – A MARKETING APPROACH

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Abstract. *In order to achieve its existential purpose, respective the development of the commerce, industry, agriculture and services, according to the requirements of the market economy within the globalization of the international economy, on one hand, and of the post-adhesion of Romania to the European Union, on the other hand, The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest needs to become an instrument and at the same time a satisfaction mean of the customers' needs, starting from the small, medium and large companies to associations and patronages and ending with the destination of Bucharest, as a harmony of these requirements. With this purpose, a marketing approach of the strategies of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest will have as an initial point, the identification and creation of a hierarchy of the identity elements and specificity of the metropolitan area of Bucharest, elements that constitute the material or human potential.*

As a result, in his quality of main organization and equidistant of the economic environment of Bucharest, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest will consolidate its image, at the same time with its importance, through all the services offered to create a lasting development of Bucharest.

Keywords: partnership strategies, personnel strategies, product strategies, promotion strategies.

1. Introduction

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest has been set-up by the Law of the Chambers of Commerce in 1864 and has been amended several times along the years, presently being an autonomous, nongovernmental, nonpolitical organization, non-profit, duly registered and of public utility.

The Government Decision no. 709/2005 is reinforcing the personality granted by the Government Decision no. 799/1990 and presently is operating under the Law no. 335/2007.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest comprises 2749 members, out of which 31 collective members (associations, employers etc.) are divided in Sections, as they are: 1155 in the Section for Services, 790 in the Section for Commerce and Tourism and 773 in the Section for Industry.

In the structure of the individual members, the small companies are in majority (about 1800), but with only a rate of 2% of the total of those operating in Bucharest, the medium sized and the big companies represent 15% and, respectively, 25% of the total of those categories and are achieving, together, a turnover of 20% of the total turnover of the Capital and 25% of the total equity.

Under these circumstances it is strictly necessarily to issue a strategy of the Chamber and sequential strategies on fields and products, to lead to a correct positioning of the Chamber in the country and abroad and to a substantial growth of the efficiency of its activities.

2. The general strategic context

The Chamber's mission is to represent, defend and support in the best way possible and permanently the members' and of other economic operators interests from the Municipality of Bucharest, in order to secure healthy and even business climate among them.

The general aim of the Chamber's activity is constituted of the economic development of the Metropolitan area of Bucharest (commerce and industry, agriculture and services).

In achieving this objective, it will be considered the fact that the City of Bucharest is not belonging to any county and is disposing of things that can easily be transformed into advantages:

- Bucharest has a population of about 2 million inhabitants and a surface of 238 square km;
- 21% of the operating companies in Romania are located in Bucharest;
- 44,3% of the volume of foreign investments are realized in Bucharest;
- 38% of the exports and 40% of the imports are achieved in Bucharest;
- 1/8 of the revenues in tourism are achieved in Bucharest.

Although is a city of a particular importance, with multiple historical, cultural and architectural values, a strong research center, is comprising also powerful social inclusion forces, big infrastructure problems (especially in the field of urban transportation), delocation of production companies, ordering the detail trade, demographic problems, social inequities, lacking of housing, particular important environment problems.

Starting from the general objective of the activity of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest, it is strictly necessarily to consider, in setting-up the strategy for sustainable long term development of the metropolitan area of

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Bucharest, simultaneously and evenly, specific sustainable long run development elements, such they are:

- economic prosperity,
- social equilibrium,
- environment protection,
- culture,
- population health.

So, the principles to constitute the basis of the long run sustainable strategy of Bucharest are the integrated approaching of the urban development policy and a special attention to be granted to the unfavoured areas as a European Capital.

2.1. The integrated approach of the urban development policy

This one should be a complex process to coordinate the space, sequential and temporary aspects, in the key sectors of the urban development policy, setting-up an even partnership between the Capital and the small cities, and assuming responsibility for the achieving ad integrum the decisions. Within this complex process, it is essentially important to attract all the involved factors, the public, but also actors from the outside of the administrative system.

The tools made available by the integrated policy have already proved their utility in many European cities and they support the early coordination of the economy development, housing, infrastructure and services and take into consideration the aging process, the migration and the circumstances and energy policy.

Within this policy, there are necessary certain lines, as they are:

- modernizing the infrastructure network and increasing the energetic efficiency, having as objective the urban transportation, the technical infrastructure, the energetic efficiency, the housing development, the information technology and communications, as well as the preventing the climate changes;

- the proactive innovation and education policies. The potential to know Bucharest is pending, greatly, on the quality of the preschool and school education, on the social and cultural networks, on the constant education, on the quality of the high education and of the research institutes, as well as on the transfer way among industry, companies and the scientific community;

- to create and secure quality public spaces. The quality of the public spaces, of the entropic urban views, are important so for living conditions of the population, so to attract units from the field of the industry based on knowledge, creative and qualified labor force, but the tourists as well.

All these constitute a serious reason to intensify the interaction of the architecture, the urban planning and the infrastructure planning, to create attractive public spaces, oriented towards the consumer.

Special attention to be paid to the unfavoured areas within the frame of a unit capital. The problems Bucharest is facing, in connection with the structural changes in

its economy, the social changes, but the general problems of globalization, are getting a greater importance. At the same time, some specific problems appear, such as: unemployment, social exclusion phenomena, economic and social differences among different areas of the capital, environment problems.

In this respect, we suggest certain acting strategies:

1. a strategy to consider as objective the improvement of the *living conditions* in the unfavoured areas, by a tighter coordination of the economic activities and of the investments with quality urban structures, modern infrastructures and healthy environment;

2. consolidating the *local economy* and the *local policy* concerning the labor force market, whose major objective to be the creation and securing on long run working places by supporting the setting-up of new production and services units;

3. a specific strategy for a *proactive education* and training policies for the children and youth in the unfavoured areas aiming to achieve and guaranty equal chances for all.

A special attention is to be paid to the issuing of a strategy for an efficient urban transportation and at affordable prices, which will lead to increasing the civilization degree in these areas and to make them attractive for their residents.

To be efficient, the sustainable strategy for the city of Bucharest has as starting point, on one side, internal factors (its specific and characteristics) and, on the other side, external factors which will act as opportunities/threats, as for example: the increasing of competition, the rapid development of media and communicating technologies, the greater growth of the interest to put in value the area (the place/city marketing) etc.

3. The strategic marketing context

As concept of the non-profit marketing for the urban area, the city marketing aims the city development by better satisfying the consumers' needs, both present and futures in relation with the competitors and is operating, generally, within a private-public partnership.

There existed in the special literature a series of contradictions with regard to the relation between this concept, „the city marketing” and the „urban planning”, most of the specialists considering that the two concepts, in fact processes within the frame of an area development, are mutually interconnected, generally speaking, the city marketing being a tool for the urban planning.

Therefore, the developing strategy of the metropolitan area of Bucharest must run the following steps:

- defining the objectives for the future development of the municipality, but of the metropolitan area as well;

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- a detailed analysis of the present situation of the capital and of the quarters, and the presentation of their strong and weak points (the analysis of the internal and external frame);
- the coordination of the regional, sequential and technical plans and policies, which comprise those steps to secure the contribution of the investments to an even development of the municipality and of the metropolitan area;
- to identify and detail the existing financing tools and control measures on the funds utilization;
- to define the coordination and implementation methods and tools at the local and regional level.

All these steps require the involvement of the citizens and their participation in increasing the economic, social, cultural and ecological quality of the metropolitan area. Simultaneously, with the above strategy, the strategy of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest will run similar steps, respectively, an analysis of the existing situation – a SWOT analysis, setting-up the general marketing objective and the respective, specific to the foreign context, marketing strategies, the issuing of the marketing program for each field/product, as well as the establishing the evaluation and control methods of its activity.

The general marketing objective of the Chamber for the post adhesion period is to increase by 15% the volume of proceeds by bringing in a number of about 1000 new members.

A SWOT analysis of the Chamber can be envisaged as follows:

Strengths

- Bucharest is representing a business environment with a significant ratio in the Romanian economy and, at the same time, attractive for investors;
- high rate of new companies, specially Small and Medium Sized Companies, simultaneously with a great number of important companies, with Romanian and foreign equity, operating in all the fields;
- recognized expertise by its business community and involvement in supporting activities and assistance to the companies for the development of the business partnerships in the country and abroad;
- a good cooperation with the majority of the local authorities, with the universities, employers associations and other organizations;
- it is an associative organization, politically equidistant and of a large representation for all the economic operators;
- it is shareholder in more commercial companies which offer important services to the business environment, respectively Romexpo, Rominvent, Edimpress and the Business Centre, „Marea Neagra”;
- the existence, in Bucharest, of the biggest universities and researches institutes;
- buildings, equipments, etc.

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Weaknesses

- quit a large number of masters of small companies or small companies do not have the respective entrepreneurial culture;
- the missing of certain concrete competences to allow the taking over of certain prerogatives of the state in the economic field;
- the lack/limitation of the access to the Commerce Register data;
- the lack/limitation of the access to other data and economic information from other central institutions;
- the impossibility to support the companies in settling all the problems they are facing, due to their high degree of diversity;
- opacity/limited openness to the dialogue of certain public institutions;
- limited human and financial resources.

Opportunities

- developing and modernizing the information infrastructure, of the public institutions and the transparency of their activity;
- the presence in Bucharest of the majority of the foreign companies branches, aware of the importance and necessity of the Chamber;
- the more involvement, although not enough, in the consultations bodies at the level of local and central authorities;
- the development of the being to be the metropolitan area of Bucharest.

Threats

- the taking over, by certain employers and professional organizations of certain competences of the Chamber;
- the danger of reducing the autonomy of the chambers as follows to the involvement of the political factor in their activity;
- the growing misunderstandings in the cameral system, as well as the manner this is envisaged by media;
- the exude of specialists already formed on the specific of the Chamber.

The main competitors of the Chamber are:

- a) The General Union of the Engineers of Romania (UGIR);
- b) The General Association of the Economists of Romania (AGER);
- c) The Romanian Centre for Trade Promotion (CRPC);
- d) Other companies and organizations having object of activity running and achieving similar or even identical operations (economic missions, symposia, conferences, exhibitions etc.).

This SWOT analysis has to be correlated with the SWOT analysis of the Metropolitan area of Bucharest.

The products and services offered by the Chamber, belonging to a modern Chamber of Commerce and Industry, are:

- to initiate and to support projects and programs to stimulate and to develop the commerce, the industry and services in Bucharest;

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- organization and intermediation of contacts and economic missions to promote in this country and abroad the members' products and services;
- organizing, directly or/and through Romexpo SA of certain fairs, exhibitions and other commercial events, including international participation and supporting Bucharest's entrepreneurs to participate in these;
- initiating and reinforcing active cooperation relations with the embassies (ours abroad and foreign in Bucharest) and with different other international organizations;
- issuing legislative materials and guides of interest for the business environment;
- services of registration and authorization of the companies and activities, including counseling and assistance to set up representations and branches in Bucharest;
- supplying studies and information with respect to companies international bids, business opportunities;
- forming, training and professional reorientation for its members and other operators of Bucharest;
- settling commercial differed through Arbitration Court operating by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- issuing certificates of origin, proves of force major etc.;
- organizing seminars and delivering courses of interest for the Bucharest companies, including environment protection, food security, standardization absorption of European funds;
- individual technical assistance to the members;
- participating in European programs, including support by the matrix linked to the European Union.

Among the strategies to be issued by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest and taking into account the specific of its activity, for the period of time immediately following, important are the strategic partnerships.

The *partnership policy* will be run on three levels: partnership with those involved in the decision taking with respect to the development of the metropolitan area of Bucharest (associations of inhabitants and of quarters, local authorities, cultural organizations, industrial and commercial associations, tourism agencies, universities and research institutes, associations for environment protection etc.), partnership at regional level (national authorities, chambers of commerce and industry, cultural organizations with European vocation, environment protection associations etc.) and partnership on international level (international economic organization – OMC, UNCTAD, CCI Geneva, bilateral chambers of commerce, cultural organizations etc.).

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest will initiate also, activities corresponding to the partnership policy, as for instance:

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- developing the mix-partnership with the local and central public administration and enforcing its position of dialogue partner with the local and central administration;

- amplifying and diversifying the cooperation with the local administration by concluding partnership conventions and developing activities, based on projects, in order to secure the involvement more active of the Chamber in the economic development of Bucharest and of its metropolitan area;

- continuing to participate in the Economic and Social Council and approaches to become permanent observer to this latter works;

- correlating the programs of developing the transfrontier cooperation with the neighbor countries;

- cooperation with the Romanian Centre for Trade Promotion, Eximbank etc.;

- supporting the associative activities in the metropolitan area.

Concerning the *promoting policy*, the Chamber will act towards the improvement of the communication with the companies from Bucharest, especially with those being members, on one side, and the improvement of their communication with the markets-target, on the other side. Under these circumstances, the Chamber will act to:

- organize promoting events for business (top of companies, competitions on different topics, symposia, miniexhibitions etc.) individually or in cooperation with local administration and with participation of media representatives;

- set-up new centers for assistance for the companies;

- inform the advantages of participation in fairs and exhibitions;

- draw-up strategies for export promotion towards the certain markets-target, specially the former traditional markets;

- diversify the services offered to the exporters;

- organize events with international participation, partnerships, economic missions, fairs and exhibitions etc.;

- continue to support the development of entrepreneurial aptitudes to the young and women;

- organize debates on the actual problems of the Romanian economy;

- intensify the activity of the Business People Club (Club 9);

- continue to print the weekly on-line „Afacerea” and to set-up a site for the business community from Bucharest;

- to resume the activity of the EURO-INFO Centre.

In order to implement the above, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest has to draw-up a new organizing structure, more elastic, adjusted to the market conditions (separating the economic activities of the specific ones, the clear delimitation of the department for professional forming on its two sides for its own members and for the thirds), the constant training of the staff, the use of the experience of certain researchers, university professors etc., based on specific contracts, in running operational activities.

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Due to the fact that the location marketing represents the main element to construct and/or to consolidate the local identity and, at the same time, an important method to promote its inheritance, and the objective of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest is subordinated and complementary to the general objective of the metropolitan area of the Bucharest, the above mentioned activities will be run under the name CCIMB, having as result the construction of a brand umbrella for the economy of Bucharest metropolitan area.

As following to the marketing program to be issued for each field and product, the achieved results will be of quantitative nature (the number of members will increase, profits of 2,5-3 mil. of Euros will be obtained) and of qualitative nature: to establish correct, cooperation relations with the local and central authorities; to improve the relations with the organizations and associations having object of activity similar or identical activities and to cooperate with them; increasing the prestige within the business community in the country and abroad and the enforcement and consolidation of its position of leader in this field, with its own identity.

All the above will have as result the *development of a strong economic growth of the metropolitan area of Bucharest.*

Conclusion

For the marketing strategies approaches, as they have been envisaged hereby in this work, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bucharest has the necessary capacities, knows to make use of them and knows to introduce them, and thus contributing decisively to the integration of the Romanian economy in the European economy by its aid to the economic growth of the metropolitan area of Bucharest. At the same time, without a coherent strategy destined to transform the capital in one corresponding to all technical, economic, ecological, aesthetic and cultural requests, Bucharest can not really become a capital in the area of Central and Eastern Europe.

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